



Access Agreement for 2017-18

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A. Introduction and summary

1. York St John University has been **widening access to higher education since its founding** as a Teacher Training College by the Church of England in 1841:

"As the most powerful means of remedying the existing defects in the Education both of the Poor and Middle Classes of Society, to establish a School for the purpose of Training Masters in the Art and Practice of Teaching".

2. Now as a modern, progressive and expanding University, **our values** continue to support that vision:

"We are an inclusive, innovative, transformative and ambitious community with a strong sense of belonging."

3. Widening Participation is a key part of our **strategic plan** and is an underpinning element of how we believe our university should function as:

"A diverse and culturally rich community."

4. We now have around 6,500 students. Our applicant demand is strong, and we have some of the best student retention and satisfaction rates in the sector. Our graduate employment figures are also very impressive: 95.7% of full-time undergraduates enter work or further study six months after graduating; attainment of 'graduate jobs' is typically over 70%.

5. We have set our Home full time **undergraduate tuition fee for 2017-18 at £9,250 per year**. In accordance with our core principles, we will reinvest a significant proportion (30%) of our additional income into bursaries, outreach activities and retention support. The impact of this investment is to reduce our **actual average fee level to approximately £8,880**.

6. We aim to review and refocus, where appropriate, our current outreach through our **new evaluation framework**. We are developing an **integrated student lifecycle team** who will work to provide enhanced pastoral support in partnership with our academic staff. Additionally, we are increasing the breadth and depth of our **data collection and analysis** to enable a greater understanding of the impact of our access work. The full roll out of Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) over the period of this Access Agreement will also begin to provide a rich source of supporting information, as will the implementation of increased case study reporting.

B. Our University and its context

York St John in its Community

7. We are at the heart of our community – geographically, culturally and economically. The City of York has a growing population, estimated in 2013 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) at just fewer than 200,000. This population is relatively prosperous in the regional and national context; it has relatively low unemployment and is ranked as the fourth least deprived city in England. However, there are distinct pockets of deprivation: 40% of York’s population live in areas that are in the top 20% for affluence in England, while 7% (approximately 13,000 people) live in areas classified as being among the 20% most deprived areas in the country.
8. The 2013 ONS population estimates show that proportion of the population from a Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) background living in York is much lower than the national average, at around 10%, but this too has grown significantly in the last decade. In particular, there has been significant growth in the ‘white other’ ethnic grouping stemming from increases in Eastern European and Traveller communities.
9. The surrounding sub-region of North Yorkshire is predominantly rural in character, with a population of 600,000 in 2013. It is also relatively affluent but, like York, has significant pockets of deprivation linked to its rural economy. Like York, it is also has a relatively homogenous ethnic composition: only 7.6% of its population is from a BME background.
10. Our University has traditionally recruited a significant proportion of its students from the Yorkshire region (approximately 55%). The more ethnically and socially diverse populations of West and South Yorkshire are well-served by more local Higher Education Institutions but remain areas in which we will continue to deliver widening participation and student recruitment activity. In recent years we have increased our student intake from neighbouring regions, nationally and internationally.

Working in partnership

11. We are an enthusiastic supporter of collaborative approaches and participate in a wide range of strategic partnerships. Four of the most significant, in the context of this agreement, are:
 - i. **York Economic Partnership:** our Vice Chancellor sits on this strategic partnership set up to promote economic growth within the city. This gives us up-to-date labour market information, as well as intelligence about supply and demand issues around graduate skills. We also contribute to the discussions within the two Local Enterprise Partnership areas within which we fall (Leeds City Region, and York and North Yorkshire).
 - ii. **Yorkshire Universities:** our Vice Chancellor sits on this collaborative partnership of the 11 HEIs in Yorkshire and the Humber (<http://www.yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/>). Its high level aims include the promotion of higher education, widening engagement, and strengthening graduate employability.

- iii. **Higher York:** our Vice Chancellor chairs this collaborative partnership of both Universities and both FE Colleges in York, together with City of York Council (<http://higheryork.org/>), which has existed since 2002. York St John University also houses the Secretariat.
- iv. **York Cares:** York St John, through its Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment, is a Board Member of this business-led charity that promotes and coordinates volunteering and philanthropic activity across the city (<http://www.yorkcares.co.uk/>).

We maintain a wide range of other collaborative partnerships and membership of relevant networks. These are set out in more detail in Section D.

Investment

- 12. We will continue to invest in supporting students through the use of targeted funding support. In total, we expect to spend 30% of our fee income above the basic level in areas relevant to this agreement, as set out below:

Financial support (£m)	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Fee waivers and bursaries	2.56	1.26	1.06	1.06	1.06
Access, student success and progression work	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80
Total	5.36	4.06	3.86	3.86	3.86

As is clear from the above table, following analysis of its own and OFFA's research, the University intends to refocus its expenditure away from fee waivers and bursaries and into long-term programmes which enhance outreach, progression and student success.

Current Performance

- 13. We monitor closely the Key Performance Indicators relevant to our Access Agreement. In most of these areas our current performance is either very close to our benchmark, or is improving. The latest available data is set out below, with performance from 2006-07 as a comparator.

Area of focus	06-07	14-15
% of young people from state schools on FT UG programmes	93.2	95.5
% of young people from NS-SEC groups 4-7 on FT UG programmes	28.9	35.1
% of young people from low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs)	13.1	17.9
% continuation rate	90.7	94.7
% students with a disability	8.4	13.3
% mature students	56.5	41.7
% part time students	27.5	16.2
% UK domiciled black and minority students	3.0	4.4
% overall satisfaction as measured by NSS	74	88
% full-time UG students in employment or further study after six months	93.5	95.7

The above table demonstrates our strong commitment and performance in relation to widening participation. There has been significant progress since 2006-07; we perform above our benchmarks in the majority of areas. In terms of access, we exceed our benchmark for recruiting young people from state schools and low participation neighbourhoods. The proportion of our students with a disability continues to be relatively high at 13.3%. Mature students make up nearly 42% of our student population. We support students to remain on course and achieve good results: our continuation rate is 93.6%, one of the highest in the sector. In addition, overall student satisfaction has climbed to 88%, 2 percentage points above benchmark and 14 percentage points above the 2006-07 figure. While recruitment of UK-domiciled BME students has increased to 4.4% we acknowledge this is an area for further improvement. This will remain a priority area for further action, as noted in paragraph 48. Finally, our graduate employment and further study indicators stands at 95.7%, again one of the best rates in the sector.

14. Evaluation of our current performance has led us to three strategic conclusions in relation to this Access Agreement. We believe we should continue to focus on:

- Extending our programme of **long-term outreach activity** to ensure we deliver relevant interventions for all target groups, including younger school ages, mature students and key stakeholders and advisers;
- **Targeting our outreach activity** more effectively, particularly to address groups where its performance is weaker and/or for groups with the greatest risk of non-progression to HE. We will also refocus activity in geographic areas, those in the city of York and its surrounding hinterland, which provide the best potential for students to progress to the University;
- Improving our **monitoring and evaluation**, particularly by developing qualitative analysis and refocusing feedback from case study work to inform longitudinal studies, improve long-term tracking and enable better analysis of impact;
- Developing a **fuller programme of outreach** and student success interventions which focus on the full student journey, including a refocusing of expenditure to broaden and deepen outreach and student success activity. This strategic decision, which continues the change signalled in our previous Access Agreements, is reflected in the expenditure profiles in this Agreement.

C. Fees, Student Numbers and Fee Income

15. In May 2016 the Government announced that from 2017 those universities that satisfied the minimum expectations set in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) would be permitted to add an inflationary increase of 2.8% to their Home undergraduate tuition fee. York St John is confident it will meet the standards set and as such it plans to set the following fee levels for those entering the University in September 2017:

Course type	Fee
All undergraduate full-time first degree students on HEFCE allocated honours programmes, Initial Teacher Training, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy at undergraduate level, and PGCE	£9,250
Foundation degree students in Education*	£3,500

**The fee rate for Foundation degree students in Education has been set at this level because these programmes have been developed in conjunction with a range of partners and are primarily targeted at specific mature audiences with no previous experience of higher education. These students will therefore not be eligible for the targeted financial support set out in this agreement but may be eligible for other bursaries.*

16. Part time students will be charged an appropriate proportion of the £9,250 fee, up to a maximum of £6,935. We currently have no part time students who are charged more than the basic fee of £4,625.
17. We have continued to set a single fee rate for our undergraduate provision and will not, therefore, charge differential fees based on subject area. We believe this is easier for students to understand and ensures there are no artificial barriers to students who might wish to change courses.
18. The total number of full time students at this University who will be paying the fees set out above, with or without waivers, is projected to be just under 4,400 in 2016-17, rising to around 4,700 by 2020-21. Fee income above the basic (£6,000) level is projected to be £12.9 million in 2016-17, rising to around £15.0 million in 2020-21. Further and fuller details are contained in the Annex.

D. Access work

Our strategy and investment plans

19. We have a comprehensive strategy for widening participation, in addition to the financial support outlined above. As previously indicated, and notwithstanding our continued excellent performance in the majority of key indicators, we have decided that it is right to increase the funding allocated to this activity over the period covered by this agreement. In 2017-18 we will allocate 30% of fee income above the basic fee to outreach, retention and student achievement.
20. Much of our outreach is conducted in collaboration with others, through Higher York and other partnerships. Within the University activity is coordinated and led centrally with a series

of supporting initiatives delivered across the University, all of which are required to set out how they are contributing to the overall strategy within Annual Operating Plans.

21. Overall our work is successful as evidenced by our performance against targets and benchmarks; however, following our own evaluation and analysis, allied to consultation with key stakeholders, we recognise that we must do more. We will:

- Work to ensure that there is a sustained programme of outreach, which is incremental in nature and supports those undertaking it at key points in their journey to higher education.
- Continue to develop our monitoring and evaluation, particularly working to embed this across all outreach within the University.
- Further target groups which are underrepresented in Higher education in general, as well as those groups specific to our University. To achieve this we will use multiple datasets to underpin specific targeting and support those who have been engaged with our outreach throughout their earlier schooling or community interventions.

We will continue to use our 3-point engagement plan as a basis of our outreach and use it to ensure targeting aims to engage with all aspects which may be having a negative impact on future aspirations. Figure 1 illustrates our approach:

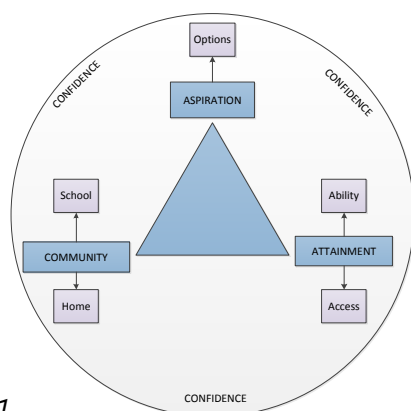


Figure 1

Activity continues to focus on four key areas of engagement:

- 1 Laying the initial foundations, aimed at Key Stages (KS) 1/2
- 2 The start of the HE journey – KS3
- 3 Moving through key phases of HE information gathering and preparation – KS3/4
- 4 Our compact scheme for school/college years 12/13 (please refer to para. 40).

We will continue to develop work that ensure there is a clear continuation of intervention, both through tracking individual students as well as working with schools/colleges and other partners to encourage support of sustain project involvement. The use of longitudinal studies through which we hope to measure the cumulative impact of our interventions should help support this work.

22. We will increase our focus on joining up programmes of outreach, in particular where multiple data points indicate a breadth of potential disadvantage. We will therefore be working across the following areas:
- Working in schools and colleges in low socio-economic areas, particularly through our school/college Compact Scheme. Additional reference points will be used to further target subsets of this group, to provide more tailored support.
 - Developing a scheme to support mature learners on Access programmes to transition into HE through a redefined Compact Scheme
 - Continuing our successful programmes to “influence the influencers”, especially foster parents and professional case-workers;
 - Developing our work to widen access to the professions and through this looking at subsets such as women into science, and reengaging with young white males through the science curriculum;
 - Working to support developments in the 14-19 curriculum, with more focus on subject-specific conferences and taster days, and the introduction of key interventions appropriate for all school years from Year 6 and upwards;
 - Begin to develop support for non-academic impacts both for individuals and their communities, in the first instance piloting a scheme to work with those with English as a second language and their teachers and supporters;
 - Continuing to further refine our programmes based on our evaluation to recruit and support groups that are under-represented in our cohorts, including UK-domiciled BME students, mature students, disabled students and care leavers.
 - We will also be piloting a programme to support belonging and engagement through the use of sport and community groups. This will seek to support outside of the classroom social development, including negative connotation of education and the role of males current social settings.

Further details and examples are given below.

Collaboration and Partnerships

23. As previously indicated, we are an active participant in a number of strategic collaborative partnerships, including the York Economic Partnership and Yorkshire Universities. The Higher York Partnership is particularly significant in the context of this Agreement: the first element in its mission is to “complement the activities of partners in order to facilitate access to higher-level learning, progression and provision through innovative joint-working”. Higher York has a detailed action plan and has instituted a number of practical initiatives to improve progression and transition routes between the institutions, and to promote Higher Education in local schools and colleges. Its website also operates as a portal for students.
24. In addition, we have bilateral partnership agreements which includes:
- **Green Apples** - with the University of York, York College and Askham Bryan College
 - **NYCHEC** - the North Yorkshire Coast Higher Education Collaboration with the University of York and the University of Hull

- **York College** - where we support the development of new access and foundation degree programmes as well as the creation of new and bespoke progression routes in specific subject areas. These developments will be supported by a programme of widening access interventions and will be aimed at a range of target groups, but in particular will target mature learners and key vocational areas.
25. Other partnerships and memberships relevant to this agenda are listed below:
- **NYBEP Ltd** (York and North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership) – promoting employability and higher education in schools throughout York and North Yorkshire;
 - **York Cares Ltd** – promoting employee volunteering. We will be deepening our involvement with programmes overseen by York Cares, including the Children’s University – which involves student volunteers working in deprived primary schools – and Starting Blocks, which offers opportunities and mentoring to Care Leavers;
 - **NEON** (National Education Opportunities Network) – we are members of this network;
 - **FACE** (Forum for Access and Continuing Education) – we are Institution Members;
 - **Wakefield Widening Participation Group** – we attend this consortium of schools and HEIs in Wakefield;
 - **Yorkshire and Humber Opening Doors to Health Professional Education Network** – we contribute to this network coordinated by the Local Education Training Board (formerly the Strategic Health Authority) which consists of the Region’s two Teaching Hospitals and the HEIs that deliver Health Professional Degrees;
 - **Higher Education Liaison Officers Association** - we are members of this association;
26. In addition, through a dedicated central function academics are supported to maintain and expand networks and partnerships, many of which are relevant to the widening participation agenda. For example: our Initial Teacher Training staff work in over 1300 settings with local authorities, schools and other organisations; while we continue to maintain and develop strategic partnerships with a range of NHS bodies including the Local Education Training Board.

Examples of Collaborative Outreach Activity

27. The University undertakes and participates in a range of outreach programmes. We are a joint partner in **Green Apples** a successful innovative, collaborative partnership across the City of York including all the local higher education institutions and further education partners as well as NYBEP, the local business and education partnership, Higher York and all of the local state secondary schools and a selection of primary schools. The progressive programme mainly focuses on interventions from year 9 -11 but incorporates a range of activities from year 6 upwards. The programme continues to raise aspirations of underrepresented groups and encourages students to consider their options post 16. Green Apples aims to help students make informed decisions. Our programme of activity includes residentials, workshops, mentoring and IAG events. All of the engagement interventions are developed based on best practice and aim to increase confidence, knowledge and expose students to opportunities which allow them to reflect on their skills and experience positively. We are currently phasing in our new evaluation and monitoring plan which will include more robust long-term tracking

of school level data for pre-16 students and individual level data of post-16 students through HEAT. Green Apples continues to build upon its success with positive collaborative relationships and innovative and continued support to students and schools in the local area.

28. The **North Yorkshire Coast Higher Education Collaboration (NYCHEC)**, launched in 2011, is a collaboration between the universities of York St John, Hull and York which seeks to ensure continuation of activity for learners. The activity supports an area of relative deprivation in North Yorkshire and is coordinated from the University of Hull's current Scarborough campus. Provision has been expanded since the partnership was launched and further developments are planned including family engagement projects, mentoring, subject revision support and taster events targeted at low socioeconomic groups.
29. We are an active participant in the **Higher York National Network for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO)** which offers a range of outreach activities to encourage young people to progress to HE. Schools have been targeted through the use of HEFCE outreach 'cold spot' data and further work undertaken to identify specific groups within those chosen. Tailored programmes have been created for each of the schools covering campus visits; open days; taster days; opportunities to attend master classes; talks about various aspects of HE and student life including different routes into HE, finance and funding, applying, writing a personal statement, and welfare and pastoral support; attendance at schools' options evenings to provide information and answer questions about HE. The partnership also includes activities to support particular groups of students, e.g. pupils with special needs and/or disabilities, looked after children, young carers; activities targeted at pupils interested in specific routes into HE; e.g. vocational programmes; activities targeted at encouraging progression into non-traditional routes e.g. women into science and engineering. Discussions are underway with our partners about the continuation of the NNCO beyond the initial period of HEFCE funding, as well as how best to maximise improvements in targeting and deliver that has come out of the collaboration.
30. We continue to take a leading role in the **York Cares** partnership, which has established the York Children's University within the city and surrounding area. This is affiliated to the National Children's University programme which aims to raise aspirations amongst primary aged children from year 3 upwards and to establish links between work ambitions and education. Additional activities through York Cares include mentoring for those at risk of becoming NEET, the primary reading development programme known as '*Right to Read*', and a range of social inclusion projects.
31. We will continue to deliver **Summer School** residential activities, aimed at schools with high Indices of Multiple Deprivation. These will raise aspirations and/or be subject focused, with additional support for those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.
32. In addition to the work coordinated centrally, academic staff across the University also deliver a range of valuable interventions:
 - The York St John Business School offers a range of outreach work which includes new relationships with feeder schools, as well as working with local and national businesses to provide real world experiences.

- Languages staff through the funding of YSJ students to go back to their school or college to talk about studying languages at University are supporting increased awareness of degree study through the "Routes into Languages" programme;
- A programme of Signing Workshops to Mature Learners;
- Continued work with Refugee Action York to increase the access of English language learners to Higher Education opportunities.
- The Community Theatre programme includes engagement with level 2/3 students, and assessments covering areas such as engaging with potential NEET students, primary pupils and with parents.
- Taster sessions are also run including a Religious Studies Sixth Form Conference, Access to Allied to Medicine programmes
- Further developments include the delivery of Foundation Degree modules in community settings aimed at mature and BME learners.
- Taster sessions and student placements are also a feature of the work of staff across the University. This includes events such as a 3-day summer school with year 10 students around the theme of Access to the Healthcare Professions;
- Counselling students work with Looked After Children in schools;
- Psychology and Biomedical Science staff offer STEM Masterclasses for pupils in years 8-10.

Specific work with targeted groups

33. In addition to the activity described above, we are continuing to develop and expand the volume and depth of its interventions across a range of under-represented groups.
- Young people from lower socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs) are being targeted through our Compact Scheme. School pupils engage with a range of aspiration and awareness-arising activity and who submit a piece of assessed, reflective work will receive UCAS-tariff point credit to smooth their entry into the University.
 - We will continue to run a number of early years intervention programmes, these are run within the primary school setting and incorporate parental engagement and support.
 - Care Leavers – we are proud of our track record in working with Care Leavers, Looked After Children, and a range of relevant agencies. The University holds the Buttle Trust quality mark and is committed to maintaining this for the remaining length of its existence. Outreach activity covers a range of interventions from aspiration-raising through to retention support for current students. Over the course of this Agreement, we will continue to deepen the relationship with the two new "Virtual Schools" for Looked After Children in York and in North Yorkshire, and will continue to work with their influencers, i.e. professional support workers and foster carers.
 - In addition to the compact scheme for school students, we will roll out a scheme for FE-based learners, which will be targeted at young people and mature learners.
 - Mature learners, we will continue to offer bespoke information sessions, Campus tours and IAG around the theme "Is HE for me?"
 - Disabled learners – we work with local specialist teaching teams to raise aspirations, confidence and knowledge amongst young disabled people. This includes the opportunity

for students to visit York St John for a day to learn about university life and the support available. The visits include discussions with existing disabled students around the realities of being a disabled student in higher education.

- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students – We have an increased focus in our work with BME communities in York and Yorkshire:
 - We will be rolling out a scheme of support for students who have English as a second language (ESL) within school settings (*'Speak Up'*). To complement this, we will also be working with teaching staff in schools to run CPD classes in ESL support. We will also be working in the following areas:
 - Traveller community. This under-represented group is often overlooked but is one which demonstrates potential to succeed in higher education. As a result, the University is introducing a scholarship to support continued study through from college/sixth form to HE and through their time in HE which is linked to engagement and achievement.
- Support through Sport – we are developing a community support project that will seek to engage groups and individuals to through the use of sport to address issues such as negative perceptions of self, peer pressures, attainment, aspiration and myth debunking. Through a number of strands this will target Male learners, as well as having a broader impact on community support.

E. Student Success and Progression

Strategy

34. We recognise that success for under-represented groups is not just about access but also about transition into and across the years of their degree and subsequently into employment. For this reason, the University's strategic plan includes a number of objectives relating to enhancing the success of under-represented groups and ensuing that the curriculum supports flexible and inclusive programme delivery. Notably, for those students entering in 2017, the University is introducing a new programme of financial support which will be focused specifically on student attainment, progression and retention. More detail can be found in paragraphs 44 and 45. We have established an overarching curriculum framework for student success as a way of bringing together the range of experiences that students will have during their time at YSJU, and the plans for how they will be supported to become successful graduates. It includes the York St John Graduate Attributes scheme and an inclusive learning and teaching framework that aims to facilitate from 2016/17 onwards a proactive approach to the ways in which pedagogy, curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. These objectives will be supported through academic development activities, which will be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure it becomes embedded as standard practice
35. We have introduced a new team to support students in tandem with their academic development, they will provide transition, progression and success programmes and support through the student lifecycle. There will be a focus on student from under-represented groups

and those with additional needs. This team will build on the strong support across the University to continue to maintain the excellent record of support students to make progress in their studies, advance from year to year and ultimately achieve a good degree.

36. The Careers and Employability team work collaboratively with Student Services in order to establish whether there are particular student groups which require more support than others. The department is already involved in pre-arrival workshops to ensure that support is given when required.

In 2016/17 the team will be trialing the use of an Employability questionnaire for Year One students which will gather data to inform the support the department gives to students, in particular those with protected characteristics. The outcomes of this will inform future strategies in relation to progression support within the University. An employer strategy is currently being developed to support businesses in allowing students to undertake work based experiences who have traditionally struggled in these areas, such as those with autism or those who may have previously been excluded due to their protected characteristics. This will have the dual purpose of helping to support businesses understand the needs and particular skills these groups of people have, as well as the students gaining valuable experience to support their future careers.

37. We participate in the HEA student engagement survey targeting all 1st and 2nd years and the HEA postgraduate taught experience survey. These surveys complement the results of National Student Survey (NSS) and improve our understanding of the student experience, enabling the University to target priority areas for enhancement. The engagement data enables us to drill down by disability and ethnicity to help us explore the impact we are having on under-represented groups and to identify future action plans.
38. We participated in the Higher Education Academy (HEA)-led "Student retention and success change programme", which builds on the outcomes of the What works? Student retention and Success programme. The programme provided an opportunity for higher education providers in the UK to work with the Higher Education Academy, Action on Access and the National Union of Students over a three year plus period. The aim was to improve student engagement, belonging, retention and success during the first year through to completion, and to evaluate the process and impact of change. Examples of the practices that have been developed institutionally because of this are shared in the next section. This project is now coming to an end and has been reported on through our quality committees. We await the national outcomes of the project but it has led to further planned enhancement work related to retention at the University.
39. The 'First in Family' programme continues to grow. This programme, specifically targets new students, who for a multiplicity of reasons, arrive with less developed skills and knowledge which may affect their ability to navigate and succeed within a university environment.
40. Through these specific strategies and our evaluative tools, we are committed to the development of targeted interventions with students from under-represented groups: from pre-entry advice and guidance, through transition support for high risk groups, to supporting student success and progression in line with the University's inclusion and employability agendas. Examples of other interventions are detailed below.

Interventions to promote retention and success

41. The following actions and activities form part of our Student Support plan:
- Pre-advice and guidance: we are continuing to develop the already effective information and guidance we offer prior to entry, through online activities and opportunities to meet staff and existing students before arrival. The Your Student Journey website has been developed to help students transition into university life. Additional support is triggered at this stage for potentially vulnerable groups (Students with a disability, those who fit into our First in Family criteria, Care Leavers, Student Carers, Estranged Students and those who disclose a mental health difficulty) who are all contacted to have the additional and dedicated support on offer explained to them.
 - The 'First in Family' programme includes a range of planned interventions designed to improve confidence, build skills and develop a sense of community and belonging. In particular students will be supported with: additional HE orientation (physical and cultural); a named support worker, study development and opportunities to build effective support networks. The programme was also written as a 12 week Moodle course as the Moodle platform offers much more in terms of analytic capabilities and provides students with another method of receiving support. The First in Family programme is evaluated by receiving student feedback, engaging past participants to help co-create the following years programme and is evaluated using data from number of Moodle interactions to see which elements of the course students use the most
 - Induction programmes now extend beyond the first weeks of term, with interventions and support in specific subjects for under-represented groups:
 - We run an Early Start programme for students who are on the ASD spectrum or have a disclosed mental health condition to help them acclimatize to University life.
 - The Peer Supporters scheme is being progressively rolled out to ensure that all new students, particularly those from widening participation groups, have access to a peer mentor to facilitate their induction and engagement with their courses. More programmes now have this as an opt out which has facilitated a stronger connection between first years and their second and third year peers.
 - Additionally the PASS programme (Peer Assisted Study Sessions) has been successfully piloted and will expand next year.
 - Other transition activities include:
 - At Risk monitoring according to various triggers
 - Family, friends and carers events to raise awareness of the support mechanisms available
 - Trips and events to build group identity and confidence
 - Peer transition talks
 - Pre enrolment social media engagement
 - Dialogue days for students to reflect on learning in collaboration with staff
 - Mainstreamed tutorials which are opt out and appear on the timetable
 - Peer-led tutorials.

- The Student Success and Engagement Team is a new team whose role is to ensure transition support continues throughout the student lifecycle and that the focus is on successful progression through each part of the student journey
 - Our work in developing student employability has been enhanced. We have established, and will develop further a very successful graduate internships programme. We have also enhanced the support we give to students to find work experience, particularly for those on courses where this are not automatically built into the programme. Our Careers and Employability Service works with all the under-represented groups and assists with CV building/writing and accessing internships and volunteering opportunities, including specifically focused activity to support disabled students to develop employability skills and secure work experience. Work is ongoing to identify the groups of students who are attending this training and whether a more targeted approach is needed to support students with particular needs.
42. We enjoy a close and productive relationship with the Students' Union which has enabled regular and embedded partnership working to support student retention, engagement and success. For example, the setting up of the Disabled Student's Forum led directly to the establishment of the Superhuman Society - a disabled student society. The University and Student Union work closely together on Wellbeing and Mental Health campaigns and SU representatives sit on University committees.

Specific work with targeted groups

43. In addition to the interventions described above, we will continue to offer the following targeted support:
- Students with disabilities: we have been successful in widening participation from this group. Our support starts as early as possible with applicants immediately engaged in a process with the Disability Advice Team which ensures that potential students are aware of and have made available to them the appropriate level of disability support. We run an Early Start programme for students who are on the ASD spectrum or have a disclosed mental health condition to help them acclimatize to University life. A facilitated weekly social programme for ASD spectrum students continues to run successfully. In the three years of this programme running not a single ASD spectrum student, who has used the programme, has dropped out or failed to progress academically. Students and their parents/carers provide feedback on the Early Start programme and this is used to improve delivery. The Disability Advice Team helped set up a disabled students' forum so as to be able to listen more effectively to the student voice. Our study development team is qualified to deliver SpLD tuition so students do not need to wait until they have a Dyslexia diagnosis before receiving support. The University has made provision to continue to provide support for students who will no longer receive funding for DSA Bands 1 & 2 non-medical help.
 - We have introduced an Employability Award which included specific development sessions targeted at students with autism. The Careers and Employability team worked

collaboratively with the Disability team to publicise the opportunity to the relevant students, initially Year 2 students searching for placements and Year 3 students searching for graduate roles. The next stage of this work is to further analyse the DHLE data and determine which groups of students are at most risk of not being able to progress into a graduate role. Once this is determined the Careers and Employability team can work with those students and the Academic Lead to develop a bespoke package of activities. We are piloting the use of the HEAR from Sept 2016. This will include a portfolio of extra-curricular opportunities that might engage students in their development. This work will be further developed over the coming year.

- Leadership for traditionally gendered roles in employment: the programme aims to support those students who have traditionally had barriers to attaining roles which have gender connotations, or where they are seen as a minority within those areas. Addressing issues of self-presentation to support positive, appropriate and assertive behaviour within a professional context. Further work to identify specific role issues will be undertaken with a broad range of students.
- Black and Minority Ethnic Students: we continue to review all aspects of our retention and success programmes to ensure that we are implementing best practice in relation to students from all the protected equality categories, including the BME cohort.
- Care leavers and estranged young people: we are proud to have been considered 'exemplary' by Buttle UK and we will continue to take a full-lifecycle approach to supporting care leavers, as well as estranged and formerly homeless students. This begins at (or before) the point of application, through transition into the university, 1:1 mentoring and maximising opportunities for success, to enhancing employability and supported transition out. We will continue to collaborate with our colleagues in NorthCLASS and the NNECL to maximise the impact of this work.
- Student carers: we recognise that students with care responsibilities face significant additional barriers during their time at university. We have implemented a system for self-disclosure at the point of enrolment and provide a dedicated first point of contact in Student Services to help with student carers' academic, practical and financial concerns, and link with external support.
- Low SEG / POLAR 1 & 2: All first year undergraduates who come from a low income background, a POLAR 1 / 2 neighbourhoods and are of the first generation of their family to attend university are invited to participate in York St John's First in Family Programme. The programme aims to enhance a sense of belonging and achievement, through the provision of timely and pertinent information and advice sharing, celebratory social events and using students to co-create the programme and encourage the uptake of opportunities to increase cultural and academic capital.
- Mature students: our Widening Participation Advisor works jointly with the Students' Union to maintain effective links between the mature student population and the Faculty Rep scheme, including providing training for the reps. We will support the Students' Union to develop an effective society for mature students to engage socially and academically, and to aid with the transmission of information about opportunities to enhance academic potential and employability. This will be supported by our two current social networks for mature students and student parents.

F. Financial Support

YSJ financial support

44. For students starting in 2017 we will be offering an on-course support package as opposed to the cash bursaries we have allocated in previous years. Under the new scheme, which we plan to deliver via 'smart card', eligible students will receive a 'cash credit' which they will be able to spend on items which *directly* support their learning and achievement. For example, on: books; stationary; specialist equipment; or on other areas which support their employability. We believe this will enable us to enhance our student success and retention rates by targeting support more effectively.
45. It is planned that all students will receive an annual amount, via the 'smart card'. To support their achievement, with students from a family with an income profile of <£25,000 per year receiving an additional sum. Such 'low income' students will not receive less than £450 per year for throughout their course.
46. The University recognises that 'cash bursary' sums have been shown to be ineffective in either improving recruitment to Higher Education, nor in improving outcomes, for students from under-represented groups. Our new scheme is specifically designed to address such concerns and will be evaluated on an annual basis; with a particular focus on student engagement, achievement, retention/progression rates, using 2016 entry as our baseline year. Following a three-year recruitment cycle we will also be able to analyse impact on degree outcomes and ultimately employment rates.
47. Through the scheme we will also continue to target key under-represented groups, including:
 - Care leavers;
 - Black and minority ethnic groups;
 - Students with the lowest residual household income;
 - Disabled students, particularly those from lower socio-economic groups;
 - Travellers;
 - Mature learners entering full time programmes
 - Learners entering part-time programmes with no previous experience of HE.

Average Tuition Fee

48. This comprehensive package of student support will mean that the estimated average fee for undergraduate honours degree courses at York St John University is will be around £8,880 in 2017-18.

G. Targets and Milestones

49. Our detailed targets and milestones are set out in the Annex. In headline terms, it remains our intention to maintain and ideally improve our performance across the board; however, current

performance is very strong and we anticipate it will be difficult to continue to improve in all areas. For example, we already recruit 95.3% of students from state schools and to continue to increase this figure will present an extremely difficult challenge.

50. The area where we feel we have most scope to improve our performance is the percentage of UK domiciled students from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Our milestones therefore include a steady increase in this percentage, and will be the subject of targeted actions, as set out in more detail in the preceding Sections.
51. In all of the areas covered by this Agreement we have, however, maintained our target trajectories as outlined in our previous Access Agreement and which are included in the Annex.

H. Monitoring and Evaluation

52. We monitor progress against the targets in this Agreement at a variety of levels within our decision-making structures, up to and including our Vice Chancellor's Group and the Governing Body. The targets form part of our comprehensive risk management system which is monitored formally several times a year, and within which any variations in performance above or below certain tolerance levels are flagged up using a traffic light system. Other Committees, including the Academic Board and the Enhancement of Student Experience Committee, monitor the planned activities in more detail.
53. The Vice Chancellor's Group has executive responsibility for the delivery of this Agreement. Operational responsibility is shared between the Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment, the Deputy Director of Student & Staff Services, and the Deans of our Faculties.
54. We have established systems for evaluating progress against all of its strategies, and ensure that we keep abreast of best practice. Where appropriate, we have followed HEFCE directions to improve our evaluative techniques. As indicated at several points in this Agreement, evaluation of the detailed implementation of previous Access Agreements has led to adjustments in our policies and priorities in certain areas. This is a continuous process and has resulted in the ongoing development of an in-depth evaluative model which will not only enable judgements to be made about individual interventions, it will also commence the process of building detailed tracking of groups and individuals into all that we do. In time this will enable qualitative judgements to be made about the longer-term impact of our work – particularly its impact on the aspirations and academic attainment of potential students from targeted under-represented groups.

I. Equality and Diversity

55. Advancing equality of opportunity for all is of key importance to York St John University and is embedded in the 2015-20 University Strategy, in particular through our mission, values and 'Community' objectives. The University believes that all students should have the opportunity to flourish and reach their full potential, and that a diverse community and inclusive curriculum will enhance the student experience and increase employability.
56. The annual equality and diversity plan of work is aligned with the access agreement, while the Equality and Diversity Adviser sits on the development group for the access agreement. The agreement provides a focus for our efforts to increase the diversity of our student body, in particular the ethnic diversity, and to enhance support for students. The introduction of the inclusive learning, teaching and assessment framework will benefit all students (and international programmes have been consulted), while the Curriculum for Student Success takes a whole-institution approach with embedded activities that will benefit specific groups.
57. As well as an expectation that WP activities will be subject to equality analysis (for example, the Schools Liaison function had an equality impact assessment in September 2013), equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff.

58. The Widening Participation officer is a member of the network of Equality Champions who work with the Equality and Diversity Adviser to advance equality and diversity across the University.
- The Equality and Diversity Adviser (EDA) sits on the WP and SR forum - The EDA meets regularly with the Student WP Adviser with a view on taking a joined-up approach to supporting students (e.g. focus group of BME students, developing guidance for trans students).
 - The EDA is a member of the core group developing the Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment Framework.
59. The equality and diversity work plan is monitored with regular progress updates. Key issues are reported to the Strategic Leadership Team.

The diversity of the student body is monitored in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and religion or belief, student carers. In relation to age, disability, ethnicity and gender we also monitor student success (progression, attainment and graduate destinations).

Each year, detailed information is published on equality and diversity, which is used by the Enhancement and Student Experience Committee (ESEC) to discuss progress which includes an analysis of student surveys and feedback. Additionally, an annual report to the Governing Body to further strengthen accountability.

A review of how equality and diversity data are provided to university committees and programmes in a way that is useful and accessible has been undertaken and will inform such provision going forward. As part of this a guide to support academic use of equality data in planning, monitoring and evaluation will be created. There will also be an exploration of how to integrate equality data into the programme dashboards which are being developed.

Further to the introduction of the inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment framework in September 2016, there will be a monitoring of outcomes for students with different impairments, in particular students with specific learning difficulties. The University will continue to seek feedback from disabled students through the Disabled Students' Forum.

J. Provision of Information to prospective students

60. We work with Higher York, City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council to ensure that high quality and appropriate Information, Advice and Guidance is provided amongst schools and colleges and other networks within the area. There is a specific Information, Advice and Guidance project for 14- 19 year olds within York supported by the University and other partners.
61. We provide prospective students and their families with clear information about fees and finance packages and there is an individualised approach to admissions handling to ensure appropriate information is provided. Information is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it

remains up to date, including that which is included on the University's website. For example, this includes illustrations of the net costs of studying undergraduate programmes at the University, taking into account estimates for the cost of living and the total financial support that will be available.

62. This information is also developed into printed materials and information packs around Student Finance and Support. A brief summary is included in the undergraduate prospectus with signposting back to the website and direct contacts for further information. The brochure and pack will be used in our liaison activities with a particular focus on under-represented groups. The detail available on the website and in the Student Finance Support pack will also be used as the basis for advice and guidance through talks, seminars and workshops targeted at parents, key target widening participation groups, prospective students, advice and guidance professionals, school staff and others who may have a key influence on student decision making not only in areas of student recruitment but also in new areas of activity.
63. Advice and support is not confined to prospective students. Additional information for new students is provided as an embedded feature of the schedule of induction, both prior to and after arrival. Additional support for current students is clearly signposted, and Student Services staff work closely with the Students Union to provide appropriate welfare guidance and support. We will also explore the use of appropriate additional media to ensure that we can respond quickly to queries.

K. Consultation with Students

64. We take our relationship with the Students' Union (SU) and with the wider student body very seriously. Representation of students is built into all levels of the University's decision-making structures. The Sabbatical Officers regularly meet with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and are represented on the Academic Board, Examinations Board and Standards Review Board. There is also representation on the Committees of Ethics and Environment, Equality and Diversity and the Enhancing Student Experience Committee (ESEC) and Appeals Boards.
65. The current SU strategy has five strategic themes: Being a Member; Community & Life Skills; Academic Achievement; Professional Development & Employability; Welfare, Support & Advice. These are underpinned by the Enablers which are believed to be: Our People; Finance and Resources; and the University Partnership. All of these are relevant to the Widening Participation agenda. Recommendations from the SU are put into action wherever possible: for example, as a result of specific feedback, the University now stages a specific welcome event for mature students in Freshers' Week, and has developed a "Peer Support" mentoring scheme.
66. In relation to this Access Agreement, as well as formal structures of consultation through University committees and boards, specific student consultation has taken place with SU sabbatical officers who work closely with Student Support Services and Widening Participation/Student recruitment staff. This has included discussions regarding the current financial support packages, the level of outreach and student success interventions the University undertakes, and the shared aim for increased involvement in by students in the full range widening access activities. The outcomes of such discussions are reflected in some of the developments outlined in this Access Agreement.

Table 7 - Targets and milestones

Institution name: York St John University

Institution UKPRN: 10007713

Table 7a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
							2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
T16a_01	Access	HESA T1a - State School (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	% from state school	No	2012-13	95.3	95.7	95.8	95.9	96	96.1	
T16a_02	Access	HESA T1a - NS-SEC classes 4-7 (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	% from NS-SEC 4-7	No	2012-13	34.5	35.5	36	36.5	37	37.5	
T16a_03	Access	HESA T1a - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR2) (Young, full-time, first degree entrants)	% from LPNs	No	2012-13	16.7	17.3	17.6	17.8	18	18.2	
T16a_04	Student success	HESA T3a - No longer in HE after 1 year (All, full-time, first degree entrants)	Continuation rate	No	2012-13	94.4	95	95.3	95.6	96	96	
T16a_05	Access	Other statistic - Mature (please give details in the next column)	% Mature students	No	2014-15	41.7	41.8	41.9	42	42.1	42.2	
T16a_06	Access	Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	% UK BME students	No	2014-15	4.4	4.8	5.2	5.6	6	6	
T16a_07	Access	Other statistic - Part-time (please give details in the next column)	% PT students	No	2014-15	16.2	16.3	16.4	16.5	16.6	16.7	
T16a_08	Access	Other statistic - Disabled (please give details in the next column)	% Disabled students	No	2014-15	13.3	13.4	13.5	13.6	13.7	13.8	
T16a_09	Other/Multiple stages	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	% overall student satisfaction	No	2014-15	88	88	88	89	89	89	
T16a_10	Progression	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	% Into employment/study	No	2014-15	95.7	95.7	95.8	95.8	95.8	95.9	

Table 7b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Please select target type from the drop-down menu	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
							2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
T16b_01	Access	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	Green Apples: a successful innovative partnership involving all local FE and HE partners as well as the Local Authority, the North Yorkshire Business and Education Partnership, Higher York and local primary and secondary schools. This is a progressive programme of interventions, mainly focused on Year 9-11 but also involving pupils from year 6 upwards.	Yes	2013-14	433	710	720	730	740	760	Numbers of students engaged with the Green Apples programme.
T16b_02	Access	Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	Year 10 Aspiration raising residential	No	2012-13	60	70	75	80	80	80	Gradual increase in numbers to become stable at 80 for this identified group
T16b_03	Access	Outreach / WP activity (summer schools)	Part of a broader series of work with schools which are in the lowest POLAR quintiles, have high levels of FSM and a low GCSE attainment level	No	2016-17	0	30	35	40	45	60	A series of general interactions culminating in a course specific project based residential.
T16b_04	Access	Outreach / WP activity (collaborative - please give details in the next column)	North Yorkshire work with schools negotiated through a consortia, expanded to include Selby (NYCHEC)	Yes	2013-14	11	13	14	15	15	12	To appropriately expand the geographical reach while at the same time become more targetted within schools, this would result in limited growth in numerical targets but would be more focussed on need
T16b_05	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Access to the professions and other taster day sessions	No	2012-13	83	95	100	105	110	115	Increased focus on taster sessions, through both self selection by individuals and school targeting
T16b_06	Access	Management targets	Improve data capture methods and build coherent longitudinal tracking	No	2015-16	0	Setting up off HEAT and associated data capture requirements.	Full implementation of HEAT	75% participants included	95% participants included	All participants included	Implement HEAT tracking and improve data collection across all projects, this has fallen a year behind predicted due to the availability of support from HEAT.
T16b_07	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	SPEAK UP a project targeting BME students involving English Language mentoring to support attainments delivered by current students	No	2016-17	0	70	90	100	120	150	
T16b_08	Access	Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)	Game Theory - community project to use sport to create a sense of belonging and identity in learners	No	2016-17	0	25	30	35	40	45	